

My name is Laura Fucci. My family and I live in Milford. I want to thank Committee Chairs Senator Gerratana and Representative Ritter for their work on this issue. I support the language in raised Bill 294 that allows budget savings to remain in the DDS system and be applied to the system's unmet needs.

I have a 23 year old daughter with autism and intellectual disability. She currently attends an excellent day program funded through DDS. She is fortunate by virtue of her date of birth to be deemed eligible for DDS services, at least for now.

Once again, DDS funding is being put on the chopping block. Not only does it put one of the most vulnerable populations on more fragile ground, it causes considerable angst and stress on the families who care for them.

Elderly parents want assurances that once they die, their children will be cared for safely and with dignity. Many do not have financial resources to supplement state funding. Young Adults who will be entering the DDS system not only have a tremendous transition to encounter, they now must deal with the stress of not knowing when they will begin a program or the amount of services they will receive when they do begin. Those of us, whose children are lucky enough to already be in the adult DDS system, worry if the present services and quality of care will continue.

Reducing the workforce to DDS and the other social service agencies will only exacerbate the problem of limited services and support.

According to DDS' website:

Services of the Department of Developmental Services are provided on a priority basis and within available appropriations.

It is my understanding that intention of this bill is to address the 2 waiting lists, however, the language is a little confusing to me. Section ( c ) (1) states that:

(c) (1) Not later than September 30, 2016, the commissioner shall notify, in writing, each individual with intellectual disability who is receiving services from the department, and the individual's parent, conservator, guardian or other legal representative of the individual's priority status and the amount of funding budgeted for each service provided by the department.

Does that mean all DDS clients will receive notification or just those on the waiting lists? Is there a point where current DDS clients, who are not on a waiting list, will see their funding reduced? Does the language of this bill grant a larger scope than intended?

Will the Commissioner change the metrics in determining Level of Need and Priority status to determine eligibility for all services and clients?

Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) On and after October 1, 2016, the Commissioners of Social Services,

Developmental Services and Mental Health and Addiction Services shall notify, in writing, any individual with intellectual disability, who is receiving state-assisted care and who is soon to become ineligible for state-assisted care, and the individual's parent, conservator, guardian or other legal representative, of the date the individual will be ineligible to receive state-assisted care. Such notice shall be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, not later than ninety days prior to the date the individual will become ineligible for state-assisted care or will stop receiving such care, whichever is earlier.

Under what circumstances would an individual who has been receiving state-assisted care be deemed ineligible?

I hope that the committee will address my concerns and all of the concerns from those providing testimony before finalizing the language in the bill.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Laura Fucci  
418 Anderson Avenue  
Milford, CT

203-874-9221